

**Change the requirement for a health certificate being mandatory and instead make it an examination by a licensed veterinarian.**

I get input from the different rescues and the chief complaint is that the vet hospitals are charging for an exam AND for a health certificate which is making it very difficult on the rescues. I've been able to use Banfield who doesn't charge for the exam (only for the certificate) but I wonder if just having written proof of an exam would suffice? That way the rescues aren't double charged. I know it's up to the individual vet hospitals what they'll charge for but if it can be just for an exam, it would help those rescues who are trying very hard to stay within the letter of the law and within budgetary constraints.

**Change the timeline for the health certificates. The first one would be issued after the 5th day of in state residency, but the second would be within 30 days of adoption vs within 15.**

The reasoning behind this is that I was under the impression that health certificates are valid for 30 days. I know that for myself, as well as for many other rescues, adoptions occur generally within that 15-30 day period of having the animal in CT rescue. It does make it financially burdensome to have to bring the animal back twice in one month for a health certificate, which is generally what happens. If at all possible, it would be a great relief to be able to hold off for a 30 day period instead of a 15. Illnesses will be caught in the first health certificate exam (hopefully) and it would prevent some rescue groups from adding that cost onto adoption fees. As far as the section of the law that requires an exam after 90 days of an animal being in rescue, I find it completely unnecessary. If an animal is going to break with illness, it has done so long before the 90 day mark. If it DOES break with illness at that point it is most likely due to exposure to something here in Connecticut.

**Have a list of "approved" Connecticut shelters available to the public.**

Massachusetts has a list of "approved" shelters which are shelters that have been inspected and approved by the MA State Dept. of Agriculture. This list is available to every vet, rescue and shelter out of state and in state. It's there because out of state pounds and shelters are only allowed to release animals to approved MA shelters. MA is trying to crack down on illegal imports by shelters / rescues who have not been approved by them (they have requirements as to quarantining, etc., and physical set-up so that they know the receiving shelters are good)....

I STRONGLY feel that CT should have available to every vet, every in state and out of state shelter / pound a list of those shelters here that have registered with the state. This way only approved, registered shelters can receive animals from out of state (and even in state). The shelters, eventually, should have a protocol to follow as far as physical sheltering goes to better ensure safety and health of the animals there, just as municipal pounds have. There needs to be consistency in care and housing but that's a "future" thing. For now, I believe completely that if the out of state pounds / shelters knew which CT rescues are approved, they can know better where they're sending their animals.

I have been involved in animal rescue for over 30 years in various capacities. My main goal for all of these years has been to ensure that every life is handled with care, compassion and responsibility. While I applaud the state's efforts to regulate the influx, I worry that too many unscrupulous

organizations, hiding under the title of "rescue" have subjected the people of our state to incredible heartache and financial burden. Too many times I have been told about pets coming in that were supposedly healthy or that had wonderful temperaments, only to be, in reality, nightmares in fur. Bandit's Place, along with many other reputable rescues, has tried for many years to help out of state shelters and pounds eliminate their over- population while they attempt to change laws and practices in their communities. With the additional cost of obtaining health certificates several times over while an animal is in our care depletes our financial resources available to help these shelters. It seems to me that keeping the mandatory examination schedule that is currently in place not only depletes valuable financial resources, but it also causes a shelter to adopt out these animals faster, and possibly to homes that would not have been approved had the laws not been in effect, in order to avoid having to pay more in veterinary care for these health certificates.

I thank you for taking the time to read over the suggestions I've had. I understand that my letter to you is lengthy, however it has been written after much time and consideration regarding the law in place. I work with shelters across the United States as well as in Connecticut and it is with that in mind that I have come to you for help. I implore you to support this bill so that we, as legitimate animal rescues, can get back to the business of helping those in need find permanent, loving homes without having to worry about the possibility of having to shut our doors due to this extra financial burden.

Thank you,

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